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SECSTATE FOR AF/W

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [NI](#) [US](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: U.S. AMBASSADOR MEET WITH PRESIDENT
OBASANJO

REF: A) ABUJA 1126 B) ABUJA 1132 C) JUNE 23

ARIETTI/CAMPBELL TELCON

1. (U) Classified by Ambassador John Campbell. Reason(s): 1.5 (b), (d)

2. (C) Summary: In a conversation following my June 25 presentation of five years, Nigeria is on "the right track." He said that debt forgive expressed satisfaction with the current U.S. stance. He referred at le their drain on scarce resources, asked for more U.S. training of Nigeri with the governor of Kano to urge the immediate resumption of polio vac delta, and that he was encouraged by the progress of Christian/Muslim r president was warm and welcoming. End summary.

3. (C) Following the credentials presentation ceremony, which includes Mercedes with an outrider, national anthems, review of an honor guard, director and RAO to the president, Obasanjo took me into a reception ro lasted twenty minutes. Also present was the foreign minister and the s pleasantries, the president spoke for perhaps five minutes. His messag Nigeria is on the right track with building democracy, fighting corrupt expressing our confidence in his economic team and hopes for concrete r the conversations he has had with U.S. officials about debt. He said h continued, Nigeria badly needs the "lifeline" of debt forgiveness.

4. (C) I turned to Nigeria's major regional role, including Liberia, S Charles Taylor. He interrupted to add Darfur, the Democratic Republic as he finished credentials presentations (the Dutch and Russian ambassa Gambian chief of state. In the next day or two he would be receiving P Kagame of Yaounde. Echoing June 21 comments by National security Advi the heavy burden Nigeria's regional responsibilities impose. He said of the visiting African heads of state and pay the costs in Nigeria of continued, visiting chiefs of state ask him to fly them to another, sub Nigeria's efforts were not always sufficiently appreciated by the inter doing: it was an opportunity to foster peace and stability. In this c Nigerian peacekeepers and asked for more.

5. (C) I turned to the polio epidemic in the north (ref b). He said t Kano state to tell him that he had to move forward on the vaccination c premature, but that the vaccination campaign would start "soon". In hi the foreign minister noted the devastating consequences of delay on the PEPFAR, and the president referred to the importance and value of Amb. interested in the links between malaria and tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS a have a favorable impact on those diseases.

6. (C) I asked about levels of violence in the Delta and in Plateau st Delta, and that he is trying to persuade the oil companies to resume fu activities as strengthening the local economies, which is crucial to co positively to Gen. Alli's effort to reconcile the Christian and Muslim Christian victims of a car accident being taken to the same hospital an urged displaced persons to return to their homes in Plateau state. Som the suspended governor. He told them to go home anyway.

7. (C) Comment: throughout the conversation, the president was warm, levels appear to be a preoccupation: while satisfied with our stance o once he is able (by his lights) to demonstrate economic progress. Neit to my reference to Charles Taylor. But second only to debt was his the drain they impose, and the lack of international recognition for what h Mohammed (ref a), he is clearly concerned about Darfur. I came away fr president is thinking about his legacy, which, when he is with the Amer governance in Nigeria and the facilitation of peace in the region. End

CAMPBELL